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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/032,893	10/26/2001	Fabio Casati	10010315	8306
7590	05/19/2006		EXAMINER	
HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY			VO, LILIAN	
Intellectual Property Administration			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
P.O. Box 272400				2195
Fort Collins, CO 80527-2400				

DATE MAILED: 05/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/032,893	CASATI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Lilian Vo	2195	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 February 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1 - 27 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1 - 7, 9 - 15, 17 - 24 and 26 - 27 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 8, 16 and 25 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/21/06</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1 – 27 are presented for examination.
2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 2/21/06 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
4. Claims 1 – 7, 9 – 15, 17 – 24 and 26 - 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dut et al. (US Pat. 6,308,163, hereinafter Du).

5. As per **claim 1**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including a method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow comprising:

defining a plurality of nodes, wherein said nodes are tasks to be executed within said workflow (col. 12 lines 46-57);

defining said resources for execution of said nodes (col. 12 line 57 - col. 13 line 6);
storing a set of data items having variables pertaining to execution of said workflow (col. 13 lines 15- 19); and

assigning said resources to said nodes for execution thereof in accordance with a set of rules, said set of rules for controlling the execution of said workflow, wherein each rule of said set of rules specifies an event, a condition, and an action (col. 5 lines 15-22, col. 8 lines 53-60, col. 10, lines 61 – 64, col. 12, lines 51 – 53, col. 13, lines 21 – 26 and col. 15, lines 10 - 53).

6. As per **claim 2**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with an execution history of said workflow (col. 8 lines 53-60).

7. As per **claim 3**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with said set of data items (col. 13 lines 21-26).

8. As per **claim 4**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with time, wherein said time is relative to the execution of said nodes, and wherein said time is relative to the execution of said workflow, and wherein said time is relative to absolute time (col. 10 lines 61 - 64, col. 11, lines 17 - 25).

9. As per **claim 5**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are based upon an event/action criteria and wherein said rules are based upon an event/condition/action criteria (col. 10 lines 61-64, col. 12, lines 51 - 53, col. 13, lines 21 - 26 and col. 15, lines 10 - 53).

10. As per **claim 6**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are defined in accordance with a common language used for the entire workflow and used for assigning said resources to nodes (col. 13 lines 30-37).

11. As per **claim 7**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said resources executing said nodes are agents (col. 1 lines 35-46).

12. As per **claim 9**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including the method as recited in claim 1 wherein said rules are Boolean expressions (col. 12 lines 51 -53, col. 13 lines 3-6).

13. As per **claim 10 - 15 and 17 - 18**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including a computer system in
a computer network, said computer system comprising:
a bus, a memory unit coupled to said bus, and a processor coupled to said bus, said processor for executing the method of claims 1-9 (Fig. 1).

14. As per **claims 19 - 24 and 26 - 27**, Du teaches the invention as claimed, including a computer-readable medium for storing computer-implemented instructions, said instructions for causing a computer system to perform the method of claims 1 - 2 (Fig. 1).

Allowable Subject Matter

15. **Claims 8, 16 and 25** are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

16. Applicant's arguments filed 2/21/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive for the reason set forth below.

17. Regarding applicant's argument that Du fails to teach claim 1's rules, in which "wherein each rule of said set of rules specifies an event, a condition and an action", the examiner disagrees. Du clearly teaches a workflow system using rules having the form "event-condition-action" in col. 15, lines 10 – 53, such that when a certain event occurs (request), if the condition is true (can_Do), then the specified action is performed (Do).

Furthermore, the workflow using rules having the form "event-condition-action" is considered obvious and well-known in the art. A support for this statement can be found in Narayanan Krishnakumar and Amit Sheth, Managing Heterogeneous Multi-system Tasks to

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Support Enterprise-wide Operations, Distributed and Parallel Databases, 3, 1 – 33 (1995). It has also been admitted by the applicant as a prior art on the specification page 51, lines 1 – 10.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lilian Vo whose telephone number is 571-272-3774. The examiner can normally be reached on Thursday 8am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng-Ai An can be reached on 571-272-3756. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the TC 2100 Group receptionist at 571-272-2100.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Lilian Vo
Examiner
Art Unit 2195

lv
May 13, 2006


SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TELEPHONE (703) 305-2100